

ATTACHMENT C

SERVICE COMPONENTS

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Services in General

1. Case Management Services

Case management is the method whereby a designated case manager assesses the needs of the refugee family, and arranges, coordinates, monitors, evaluates, and advocates for services that will enable the refugee family to attain self-sufficiency. Resettlement agencies proactive case management models with a single point of contact and must develop and provide accountability for each refugee and his or her family which promote the goal that leads to the refugee/refugee family achieving the earliest possible economic self-sufficiency. The primary vehicle for carrying out case management is the Comprehensive Resettlement Plan (CRP). **The essential and required elements of a CRP are listed in Attachment B.**

The Office of Newcomer Services will fund trained, bilingual/bicultural caseworkers that will develop comprehensive resettlement plans (CRP) for each refugee/refugee family. The CRP must be developed with the needs of the family or household group in mind and with the full participation of each family member. Every effort shall be taken to address the special needs of refugee women, such as childcare, and transportation. Case managers will work with refugees to avoid utilization of refugee cash and medical assistance except when absolutely necessary, will integrate this assistance into a refugee's overall plan for achieving self-sufficiency, and will teach refugees that public assistance should always be considered as a temporary form of aid.

From the outset, an important objective of the CRP-centered case management is a continuum of service between the sponsor/voluntary agency and ONS-funded services. Another objective is the involvement of the sponsors and voluntary agencies, which are the first U.S contact with the refugee/refugee family, in the development of the CRP. Through the CRP, the resettlement agency designs service delivery plans that prevent gaps in service delivery and duplication of effort, and that capitalize on the community resources available to support the refugee/refugee family.

Documenting information about the refugee family is essential in developing each CRP. The case manager assesses the refugee/refugee family's overall needs, interests and aptitudes, present abilities, previous education, work experiences, language ability, and potential barriers to self-sufficiency. The CRP must recognize the importance of each family member in pursuing self-sufficiency and effective resettlement; it references the needs and abilities of each family/household member that affect his/her employability and overall assimilation needs.

A crucial portion of the CRP is the strategies that are developed to address the needs identified, including steps needed to overcome barriers to self-support, to achieve the earliest possible durable employment for each employable member of the household. The plan will include service strategies to address *other services needed to ensure employment*, including English language training to be provided concurrently with employment, other supportive services, and, only when absolutely necessary, transitional cash and medical assistance. The CRP should be developed with each refugee, building on his/her strengths and talents and should clearly lay out action steps and time frames for achieving proposed goals. CRP's for family members should be developed together and cross-referenced. The plan must be monitored and revised as conditions of the refugee and family change.

It is imperative for the case manager to develop a mechanism for tracking the refugee or family unit through the service system. This may include routing or communication documents, which demonstrate that each resettlement agency involved with the family is working cooperatively to advance the goals of the CRP. The case manager should monitor the progress of the refugee and the refugee household on a monthly basis and provide evidence of this monitoring in the case files. The CRP should be reassessed after 12 months and, if the refugee or household has not achieved self-sufficiency, a new CRP should be developed with specialized, intensive services that ensure economic independence and family stability.

An important aspect of work is developing networks within the community to meet the refugees' needs as described in the CRP. Types of services include housing, education, health and mental health, and legal aid. The case manager serves as an advocate for the refugee family and assists agencies and community organizations in developing culturally appropriate services or in identifying and removing barriers that prevent refugees from accessing needed mainstream services. In addition, the case manager will develop linkages with ethnic organizations/agencies and ethnic community leaders in order to provide the culturally appropriate support and mentoring needed by newly arriving refugee families.

Maintenance of case files on every refugee is essential, and the files should be cross-referenced by family member. The file should contain the CRP family self-sufficiency plan, and contacts made to the refugee/refugee family and on behalf of the refugee/refugee family.

Finally, regardless of the service provider's staffing pattern, successful case management demands a team approach. The CRP and self-sufficiency plan reflect not only relationships among the needed services but also dictate the interaction of staff involved in carrying out the service plan. Thus, staff responsible for employment services confers with ESL staff, support services staff, and any other staff that have responsibility for the welfare of the refugee and/or service delivery.

All case management must be carried out in accordance with the portion of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act that pertains to persons of limited English proficiency (LEP's). Most refugees arrive with minimal English skills, and even those refugees who may speak English well conversationally may be unfamiliar with medical or legal terms. For this reason, case management must always be conducted in a language that best accommodates the understanding of the client. Making provision for language capacity ensures that no refugee will be denied access to programs, activities, services, and entitlements through lack of understanding or misinformation. Resettlement agencies are mandated to have bi-cultural and bi-lingual staffs that mirror those of the population served. It may be impossible and impractical for agencies to have every language represented on staff. For this reason, resettlement agencies must have a plan in place for securing interpreters of languages not represented on staff. Interpreters under contract to the agency and volunteers are primary methods for achieving this language capability.

2. Employment Services

Employment services must begin immediately after the refugee family's needs have been assessed and a CRP has been developed. Employment services are designed to assist a refugee in obtaining a job that uses the refugee's skills, if possible, has durability, offers health insurance, provides an acceptable level of income in the context of the family's needs, and leads ultimately to the earliest possible economic self-sufficiency.

In instances in which refugees are TANF recipients, cooperation and coordination between local departments of social services and refugee service providers are keys to seamless and effective

employment and support services to the refugee family. **All resettlement providers under contract with ONS must be able to provide accurate TANF data to ONS through the Virginia Newcomer Information System (VNIS).**

Employment services must be linguistically and culturally appropriate in all phases, including assessment of the employment options for refugee families, teaching job search and retention skills, and marketing the refugee's skills.

Employment services include:

- Orientation to the American workplace
- Counseling in job-seeking methods such as preparing a resume or job application
- Training on interviewing techniques
- Providing information on employer benefits
- Assisting the refugee in developing a job search plan
- Referring the refugee to prospective employers

Providers will work with refugees to secure durable job placements and follow-up with the refugee in the first few days after placement, and at 30, 60 and 90 days following the placement. Providers *are expected* to address concerns and/or problems, if any, and provide additional supportive services to ensure job retention, and employee/employer satisfaction with the job placement.

Because of the objective of a durable job placement, other hands-on activities may be required. These may include going to the work site with the employee and providing translation and interpretation services, training in the required work skills, counseling on the employer's personnel policies and procedures, giving information about job expectations and requirements, and resolving problems that may arise. If a placement is terminated, the provider will work to locate another placement.

The reality is that for many refugees, an entry-level job will be the first placement possible. However, employment services should not be deemed successful simply on the grounds that a refugee has obtained and is keeping a particular job. Quality employment services build in as an objective for each employed refugee the potential that the status of the employee can be improved either through promotion and/or additional training in an existing job, or through job upgrades. Applicants must indicate in their CRP's that job upgrades are a consideration with each refugee enrolled in employment services. In addition, methods and strategies for job upgrades and enhancements must be indicated in the description of the overall employment services plan submitted as part of the application.

Service providers also seek vocational skills training opportunities that provide a refugee with the technical skills and knowledge needed for employment in a specific occupation. Specific activities may include:

- Occupational and technical skills training
- On-the-job training
- Skills re-certification
- English language training that focuses on work specific vocabulary or that is provided at the employee's work site

Successful assistance in recertification will include researching state and city regulations for professional re-certification, document translation, and developing and maintaining linkages with different professional certification organizations.

Providing employment services goes beyond working with refugees to secure job placements. To be effective, they must be coupled with a community approach to refugee employment. The successful service provider reaches into the community to provide employer training on cross-cultural differences, promote the strengths of refugees as employees, and advocate for job opportunities that match the skills and abilities of refugee clients. Networking with trade groups and employer associations within the community is a means to keep abreast of the local labor market; tie in to employment resources, training, and employment opportunities; and foster visibility for the refugee resettlement programs.

3. English Language Services

Most refugees arrive with little or no ability to speak the English language. Some have limited literacy in their own language, making it more challenging to learn the English language. Resettlement providers must incorporate English Language Training (ELT) into the mix of core services made available to refugees. There is no one "best method" of providing ELT. Virginia's service providers will utilize a broad spectrum of English language training options that includes:

- well-established adult education programs
- computer assisted English, on-site neighborhood training
- one-on-one tutors
- work site training
- volunteer/mentor teachers

Often, and sometimes of necessity, ELT for an individual or family will be a combination of methods. For refugees with extremely low functioning in English, service providers can best assure successful learning through the support of tutors, volunteers, or at least very small group settings that are less threatening and allow more flexibility than more structured settings.

Two imperatives for the provision of ELT are:

- **ELT must be provided concurrent with employment services, and**
- **ELT must be accessible, regardless of the mode.**

English as a Second Language (ESL) classes should be scheduled at times and places convenient to the refugee and refugee household, including night and week-end classes for those who are employed or are engaged in job search activities.

Further, in order to assure that the language level provided is relevant to each refugee's English capability; ONS mandates that an initial English test be administered for each refugee prior to enrollment into English language training. The test, whether done in-house by the resettlement agency or by another party, is the basis for determining the ELT needs of the refugee assessed.

Hence, the test should be sufficiently comprehensive to allow the service provider enough information to accurately determine the refugee's level of English ability. This determination yields appropriate ELT strategies that become an essential part of the CRP. Creative English language training programs and approaches are encouraged, and the efficient use of existing community resources, such as literacy councils and libraries, is also encouraged.

4. Support Services

The provision of translation and interpreter services by refugee service providers is foundational to the efficacy of all services and is critical to newly arriving refugees as they assimilate into local communities. In addition, providers shall provide other supportive services designed to assist refugees and refugee households in overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency. Activities may include:

- Transportation
- Day care
- Driver education
- Household management services.

Service providers will also establish linkages and make use of existing community services in order to provide the necessary support and address refugees' multiple needs. Types of services include:

- Housing assistance
- Mental health services
- Immigration services
- Legal aid

Understanding refugee physical and mental health is essential to successful refugee resettlement. Virtually all refugees have been uprooted from their homeland by force because of their religion, ethnicity, or political affiliation and most have gone through traumatic experiences prior to their arrival in the United States. Many have seen their loved ones killed or have witnessed cruel treatment of their family members in the hands of authorities. Additionally, few refugees have had exposure to health services; many arrive with untreated health symptoms or conditions. Indeed, many refugees have themselves been victimized physically, mentally, and socially prior to their arrival in the United States. It is imperative that resettlement providers establish and maintain ongoing linkages to local health and mental health care providers to ensure that the medical conditions of refugees are addressed and treated, for the refugee's welfare and also to overcome conditions that barriers to self-sufficiency and assimilation.

5. Education, Outreach, and Resource Sharing

Education, outreach, and resource sharing are viewed as essential ingredients in refugee resettlement and should always be **incorporated into the provider's overall service delivery plan.**

The Office of Newcomer Services supports the development of community services that equip refugees and their families with the skills needed to adjust and assimilate into the local communities. Moreover, it recognizes the impact of the participation of the community in this effort. Applicants are encouraged to design innovative community liaison initiatives that foster community involvement in the resettlement program and work to educate the public about cultural diversity. These services should

work to ensure the smooth integration of refugees into the host community by balancing the community and refugee needs to their long-term mutual benefit.

This category of service includes recruiting and training volunteers and the design of volunteer initiatives to provide refugees and their families with cross-cultural and moral support, encouragement in achieving resettlement goals, companionship for homebound women, and/or other needed support. ONS strongly recommends that volunteers receive extensive training, operate under agreements or contracts, be supervised by a case manager or other salaried employee, and that they receive periodic evaluations and guidance.

Targeted Assistance Services

The TAP grant is awarded to ONS for service provision in localities with large refugee populations, high refugee concentration and/or high use of public assistance, and where specific needs exist for supplementation of currently available resources. Currently, the two Virginia communities most impacted by refugees are Fairfax County (including the independent cities of Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, and Falls Church) and the Richmond Metropolitan Area. Target Assistance Program funds must supplement and complement the resettlement system and work in concert with other available funds to foster the earliest possible durable economic self-sufficiency for refugee individuals and families.

It is the expectation of ONS that TAP funds be utilized to pursue methods and strategies that elevate the potential for refugee self-sufficiency by extending service capacities and capabilities to meet the unmet needs of refugees. According to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the funds “must be used primarily for employability services designed to enable refugees to obtain jobs with less than one year’s participation in the targeted assistance program.” Targeted assistance services may continue to be provided after a refugee has entered a job to help the refugee retain employment or move to a better job. The funds may not be used for long-term training programs such as vocational training that last for more than one year or educational programs that are not intended to lead to employment within a year.

Examples of innovative and “non-traditional” programs and approaches, such as the list that follows, are encouraged.

- Focus on secondary or tertiary wage earner with service package that will address barriers and promote employment
- Comprehensive array of services (day care, housing/emergency assistance) for hard to place refugees
- Service plans that address the needs of women with minimal employment skills
- Service plans that center on special arrangements with employers to meet the needs of refugees with physical disabilities
- Service plans that center on expediting English language training for refugees with minimal English and minimal education